

Article - Public Safety

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§14–102.

(a) To ensure that the State will be adequately prepared to deal with emergencies, to protect the public peace, health, and safety in the State, to preserve the lives and property of the people of the State, and to ensure the social and economic resilience of the State, it is necessary to:

- (1) establish a Maryland Department of Emergency Management;
- (2) authorize the establishment of local organizations for emergency management in the political subdivisions;
- (3) confer on the Governor and on the senior elected officials or governing bodies of the political subdivisions the emergency powers provided in this subtitle;
- (4) provide for the rendering of mutual aid among the political subdivisions and with other states in carrying out emergency management functions; and
- (5) authorize a comprehensive emergency management system that empowers all State departments and agencies to systematically prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potential or actual emergencies through risk reduction and consequence management.

(b) It is the policy of the State and the purpose of this subtitle to coordinate, to the maximum extent possible, all emergency management functions of the State with the comparable functions of the federal government, other states, political subdivisions, other localities, and private agencies, so that the most effective preparation and use may be made of the resources and facilities available for dealing with any potential or actual emergency.

(c) (1) It is the policy of the State that the initial governmental authority and responsibility for emergency management activities and operations be placed at the local level.

(2) The State shall prepare for emergency management activities and operations and coordinate activity in support of the response, but may not preempt local authority for responding to an emergency unless:

(i) 1. the emergency involves more than one political subdivision; and

2. one or more of the political subdivisions involved makes a request for State-level authority to coordinate or intervene;

(ii) the political subdivision or subdivisions in which the emergency occurs issues a request from the senior elected official for the State to assume authority for the emergency;

(iii) evidence exists that the political subdivision is overwhelmed by the emergency; or

(iv) the Governor or the Governor's designee determines that additional resources are necessary to protect the public interest.

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